An Introduction
to
Sri Aurobindo's Epic

Savitri – A Legend and a Symbol

Savitri
BHAVAN

2019

1: Sri Aurobindo
on
Savitri

Author's Note

The tale of Satyavan and Savitri is recited in the Mahabharata as a story of conjugal love conquering death. But this legend is, as shown by many features of the human tale, one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle. Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save; Aswapati, the Lord of the Horse, her human father, is the Lord of Tapasya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes; Dyumatsena, Lord of the Shining Hosts, father of Satyavan, is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory. Still this is not a mere allegory, the characters are not personified qualities, but incarnations or emanations of living and conscious Forces with whom we can enter into concrete touch and they take human bodies in order to help man and show him the way from his mortal state to a divine consciousness and immortal life.

SRI AUROBINDO

2: The Mother on *Savitri* [1]

It does not matter if you do not understand *Savitri*, read it always. You will see that every time you read it there will be something new revealed to you. Each time you will get a new glimpse, each time a new experience; things which were not there, things you did not understand arise and suddenly become clear. Always an unexpected vision comes up through the words and the lines. Every time you try to read and understand, you will see that something is added, something which was hidden behind is revealed clearly and vividly. I tell you, the very verses you have read once before, will appear to you in a different light each time you re-read them. This is what happens invariably. Always your experience is enriched, it is a revelation at each step.

But you must not read it as you read other books or newspapers. You must read it with an empty head, a blank and vacant mind, without there being any other thought; you must concentrate much, remain empty, calm and open; then the words, the rhythms, the vibrations will penetrate directly to this white page, will put their stamp upon the brain, will explain themselves without your making any effort.

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1. This text is based on a talk of the Mother in French to her young disciple Mona Sarkar, who noted it down from memory several years later. The Mother later said "I have seen what he has written and found it correct on the whole." This is an English translation of that conversation on *Savitri* as well as a few others related to it, to give a completer picture. It is taken from Mona Sarkar's book *Sweet Mother: Luminous Notes*, published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust in 2009 and quoted here with grateful acknowledgement to Mona-da and the Trustees.

Savitri alone is sufficient to make you climb to the highest peaks. If truly one knows how to meditate on *Savitri*, one will receive all the help one needs. For one who wishes to follow this path, it is a visible help, as though the Lord himself were taking you by the hand and leading you to the destined goal. And then, every question, however personal it be, has its answer here, every difficulty finds here its solution, indeed there is everything that is necessary for doing the Yoga.

"He has crammed the whole universe in a single book." It is a marvellous work, magnificent and of an incomparable perfection.

You know, before writing *Savitri* Sri Aurobindo said to me, "I am impelled to launch on a new adventure; I was hesitant in the beginning, but now I am decided. Still I do not know how far I shall succeed. I pray for help." And you know what it was? It was – before beginning, I warn you in advance – it was his way of speaking, so full of humility and divine modesty. He never ... asserted himself. And the day he actually began it, he told me, I have launched myself in a rudderless boat upon the vastness of the Infinite. And once having started he wrote page after page without intermission, as though it were a thing already complete up there and he had only to transcribe it in ink down here on the pages.

In truth, the entire form of *Savitri* has descended "en masse" from the highest region and Sri Aurobindo with his genius only arranged the lines – in a superb and magnificent style. Sometimes entire lines were revealed and he has left them intact; he worked hard, untiringly, so that the inspiration could come from the highest possible summit. And what a work he has created! Yes, it is a true creation in itself. It is an unequalled work. Everything is there, and it is put in such a simple, such a clear form; verses perfectly harmonious, limpid and eternally true. My child, I have

read so many things, but I have never come across anything which could be compared with *Savitri*. I have studied the best works – in Greek, Latin, English and of course in French literature, also in German and all the great creations of the West and the East, including the great epics; but I repeat it, I have not found anywhere anything like *Savitri*. All these literary works seem to me empty, flat, hollow, without any deep reality – apart from a few rare exceptions, and these too represent only a small fraction of what *Savitri* is. What grandeur, what amplitude, what reality: it is something immortal and eternal he has created. I tell you once again, there is nothing like it in the whole world. Even if one puts aside the vision of reality, that is, the essential substance which is the heart of the inspiration, and considers only the lines in themselves, one will find them unique, of the highest classical kind. What he has created is something man cannot imagine. For everything is there, everything.

It may then be said that *Savitri* is a revelation, it is a meditation, it is a quest of the Infinite, of the Eternal. If it is read with this aspiration for Immortality, the reading itself will serve as a guide to Immortality. To read *Savitri* is indeed to practise Yoga, spiritual concentration; one can find there all that is needed to realise the Divine. Each step of the Yoga is noted here, including the secret of all other Yogas. Surely, if one follows sincerely what is revealed here in each verse one will finally reach the transformation of the Supramental Yoga. It is truly the infallible guide who never abandons you; its support is always there for him who wants to follow the path. Each verse of *Savitri* is like a revealed Mantra which surpasses all that man possesses by way of knowledge, and I repeat this, the words are expressed and arranged in such a manner that the sonority of the rhythm leads you to the origin of sound, which is OM.

My child, yes, everything is there: mysticism, occultism, philosophy, the history of evolution, the history of man,

of the gods, of creation, of Nature, how the universe has been created, why, for what purpose, what destiny – all is there. You can find there all the answers to all your questions. Everything is explained, even the future of man and of the evolution, all that nobody yet knows. He has expressed them in beautiful and clear words so that spiritual adventurers who wish to solve the mysteries of the world may understand it more easily. But this mystery is well hidden behind the lines and one must rise to the required level of true consciousness to discover it. All the prophecies, all that is going to happen is presented with a precise and wonderful clarity. Sri Aurobindo gives you here the key to find the Truth, to discover the Consciousness, to solve the problem of what the universe is. He has also indicated how he has opened the door of the Inconscience so that the light may penetrate there to transform it. He has shown the path, how to liberate oneself from the Ignorance and climb up to the superconscience; each stage, each plane of consciousness, how one can scale them, how one can cross the very barrier of death and attain Immortality. You will find the entire route in detail, and as you go forward you can discover things altogether unknown to man. That is what *Savitri* is, and yet much more. It is truly an experience – reading *Savitri*. All the secrets that man possesses, he has revealed them, as well as all that awaits him in the future; all this is found in the depths of *Savitri*; but one must have the knowledge to discover them, – the experience of the planes of consciousness, the experience of the Supermind, even the experience of the conquest of Death. He has noted all the stages, marked each step needed in order to advance in an integral way in the integral Yoga.

All this is his own experience, and what is most surprising is that it is also my own experience. It is my sadhana which he has described. Each object, each event, each realisation,

all the descriptions, even the colours are exactly what I saw and the words, the phrases are also exactly what I heard. And all this before having read the book. I read *Savitri* many times afterwards, but earlier, when he was writing he used to read it to me. Every morning I used to hear him read *Savitri*; at night he would write and in the morning read it to me. And I observed something strange, that – day after day, the experiences he read out to me in the morning were those I had had the previous night, word for word. Yes, all the descriptions, the colours, the pictures I had seen, the words I had heard, all, all, I heard it, put by him in poetry, into miraculous poetry. Yes, they were exactly my experiences of the previous night which he read out to me the following morning. And it was not just one day, but for days and days together. And every time I used to compare what he said with my previous experiences and they were always the same. I repeat, it was not that I had told him my experiences and that he had noted them down afterwards, no, he knew already what I had seen. It is my experiences he has presented all along and they were also his experiences. It is, moreover, the picture of our adventure together into the unknown or rather into the Supermind.

These are the experiences lived by him, realities, supracosmic truths. He experienced all these as one experiences joy and sorrow in a physical manner. He has walked in the darkness of inconscience, even in the neighbourhood of death, endured the sufferings of perdition, and he has emerged from the mud, the world-misery, to breathe the sovereign plenitude and enter the supreme Ananda. He has traversed them all, these realms, borne the consequences, suffered and endured physically what one cannot imagine. Nobody till today has suffered like him. He has accepted suffering to transform suffering into the joy of union with the Supreme. It is something unique and incomparable in the history of the world. It

is something that has never happened, he is the first to have traced the path in the Unknown so that we may be able to walk with certitude towards the Supermind. He has made the work easy for us. *Savitri* is his whole Yoga of transformation and this Yoga, it is for the first time that we see it appear in the earth consciousness.

And I think that man is not yet ready to receive it. It is too high and too vast for him. He cannot understand it, grasp it, for it is not by the mind that one can understand *Savitri*. One needs spiritual experiences in order to understand and assimilate it. The more one advances on the path of Yoga, the more one assimilates and better. No, it is something which will be appreciated only in the future, it is the poetry of tomorrow of which he has spoken in *The Future Poetry*. It is too subtle, too refined, – it is not in the mind or by the mind, it is in meditation that *Savitri* is revealed.

And men have the audacity to compare it and find it inferior in inspiration to that of a Virgil or a Homer. They do not understand, they cannot understand. What do they know? Nothing at all. And it is useless to try to make them understand. It will be known what it is, but in a distant future. It is only the new race with the new consciousness which will be able to understand. I assure you that there is nothing under the blue sky to compare with *Savitri*. It is the mystery of mysteries. It is a super-epic, it is super-literature, super-poetry, super-vision, it is a super-work even if one considers only the number of lines he has written. No, these human words are not adequate to describe *Savitri*. Yes, one needs superlatives, hyperboles to describe it. It is a hyper-epic. No, words express nothing of what *Savitri* is, at least I do not find them. It is of immense value – spiritual value and all other values; it is eternal in its subject, infinite in its appeal, miraculous in its mode and power of execution; it is a unique thing, the more you come in contact with it, the higher will you be lifted up. Ah, truly it is something! It

is the most beautiful thing he has left for man, the highest possible. What is it? When will man know it? When is he going to lead a life of truth? When is he going to accept this in his life? This yet remains to be known.

My child, every day you are going to read *Savitri*; read properly, with the right attitude, concentrating a little before opening the pages and trying to keep the mind as empty as possible, absolutely without a thought. The direct road is through that – the heart. I tell you, if you try to really concentrate with this aspiration you can light the flame, the psychic flame, the flame of purification in a very short time, perhaps in a few days. What you cannot do normally, you will do it with the help of *Savitri.* Try and you will see how very different it is, how new, if you read with this attitude, with this something at the back of your consciousness as though it were an offering to Sri Aurobindo. You know it is charged, fully charged with consciousness; as though *Savitri* were a being, a real Guide. I tell you, whoever wants to practise Yoga, if he tries sincerely and feels the necessity, he will be able to climb with the help of *Savitri* to the highest rung of the ladder of Yoga, will be able to find the secret that *Savitri* represents. And this without the help of a Guru. And he will be able to practise it anywhere. *Savitri* by itself will be his guide, for all that he needs he will find in *Savitri.* If he remains absolutely quiet when he is faced with a difficulty, or when he does not kno w where to turn in order to go forward and how to overcome obstacles, for all these hesitations and these incertitudes which overwhelm us at every moment, he will have the necessary indications, and the necessary concrete help. If he remains absolutely calm, open, if he aspires sincerely, always he will be as if led by the hand. If he has faith, the will to give himself and the essential sincerity, he will reach the final goal.

Indeed, *Savitri* is something concrete, living, it is all replete, packed with consciousness, it is the supreme

knowledge above all human philosophies, all human religions. It is the spiritual path, it is Yoga, Tapasya, Sadhana, everything, in its single body. *Savitri* has an extraordinary power, it sends out vibrations for him who can receive them, the true vibrations of each stage of consciousness. It is incomparable, it is truth in its plenitude, the Truth Sri Aurobindo brought down on the earth. My child, one must try to find the secret that *Savitri* represents, the prophetic message Sri Aurobindo reveals there for us. This is the work before you. It is hard but it is worth the trouble.

Blessings
The Mother
5-11-1967

3: More Words from the Mother on *Savitri*

Savitri
The supreme revelation of
Sri Aurobindo's vision.

Savitri is a mantra for the transformation of the world.

The importance of Savitri is immense.
Its subject is universal.
Its revelation is prophetic.
The time spent in its atmosphere is not wasted.

I believe it is his message:
all the rest are the preparations,
but Savitri is the message.

For the opening of the psychic,
for the growth of consciousness,
and even for the improvement of English,
it is good to read one or two pages of Savitri each day.

4: The Development of *Savitri*

Savitri began as a narrative poem of moderate length based on a legend told in the Mahabharata. Sri Aurobindo considered the story to be originally "one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle." The opening of the earliest known version is dated "August 8th 9th / 1916." Bringing out its symbolism and charging it progressively with his own spiritual vision, he turned *Savitri* into the epic it is today. Sri Aurobindo has explained in a letter how he wrote the poem: "I used *Savitri* as a means of ascension. I began with it on a certain mental level, each time I could reach a higher level I rewrote from that level. ... In fact *Savitri* has not been considered by me as a poem to be written and finished, but as a field of experimentation to see how far poetry could be written from one's own yogic consciousness and how that could be made creative."

The development of the poem from 1916 to 1950 can be traced through letters written by Sri Aurobindo in the course of its composition as well as the multitude of successive manuscripts created in the process. In 1946 he wrote to a disciple who had been assisting him by typing fair copies in the late 1930s, "In the new form it will be a sort of poetic philosophy of the Spirit and of Life much profounder in its substance and vaster in its scope than was intended in the original poem. I am trying of course to keep it at a very high level of inspiration, but in so large a plan covering most subjects of philosophical thought and vision and many aspects of spiritual experience there is bound to be much variation of tone: but that is, I think, necessary for the richness and completeness of the treatment."[1]

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1. CWSA 27:280

By the mid-1940s Sri Aurobindo's eyesight was failing and he needed the help of a scribe, his disciple Nirodbaran, to put the rest of the poem into a finished form. Near the end of his life, Sri Aurobindo's eyesight was so poor that he no longer wrote at all. The work on *Savitri* proceeded entirely by dictation. Virtually the whole revision of Book Eleven, The Book of Everlasting Day was done in this purely oral manner. Book Eleven culminates in the longest continuous dictated passage in the poem. This is the section which begins on p. 702 with "Descend to life ..." and ends at the bottom of p. 710 with "This earthly life become the life divine." Regarding Sri Aurobindo's dictation in Book Eleven, the scribe reports that "line after line began to flow from his lips like a smooth and gentle stream and it was on the next day that a revision was done to get the link for further continuation." In late 1950 Sri Aurobindo was engaged in a painstaking revision of a passage from Book Six Canto Two which had already been printed in fascicle form, to which he had dictated some changes. This was reportedly the last work he did on *Savitri.* A short paragraph before the concluding description of Narad's departure was the final passage to receive detailed attention in November 1950, less than a month before Sri Aurobindo's passing. When Sri Aurobindo asked, "What is left now?" and was told that Book Eight, The Book of Death and Book Twelve, Epilogue still required final revision, he is said to have replied "Oh, that? We shall see about that later on". Thus on *Savitri* was put what Nirodbaran refers to as 'the seal of incomplete completion', about two weeks before the Darshan of November 24th 1950. Sri Aurobindo left his body a few days later, on December 5th.

5: A Summary of Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri – A Legend and a Symbol*[1]

Book One – The Book of Beginnings

Canto One – The Symbol Dawn

The hour of manifestation has not yet arrived. The Gods who preside over the Creation have not yet awakened; they are still sleeping. Barring the path of the Divine Awakening, in the timelessness and silence lies the huge foreboding Mind of Night. It senses the approaching Dawn and dreads it. It longs to return to the original darkness and unconsciousness. But it is compelled to awaken. In the darkness and nothingness something stirs: an insistent urge that wants to come into existence but does not know how to do so. That tiny movement of aspiration arouses the Inconscient and awakens it to a state of Ignorance: a Thought is sown in the nothingness, a Sense is born, a Memory moves. It is as if a Soul that has been dead for a long time wants to live again. But all traces of the previous cycle of manifestation have been wiped out. It has to start from nothing, to rebuild all its previous consciousness and achievements, and all its earlier experiences have to be relived once again. All this is possible by the Divine Grace. Hope arises in the Darkness and Unconsciousness. Slowly and gradually Dawn appears; the Darkness falls away like a cloak from the body of a god. Earth feels the coming of Light; it hears the steps of the Dawn Goddess, everything awakens and worships the new Light. But the Earth is not able to keep that glorious divine Light; it fades away into the common light of day as all the earthly creatures awaken. Savitri too awakens, remembering that this is the day when her husband Satyavan must die.

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1. Text compiled by Shraddhavan, based on work by Shri M.P. Pandit and members of the Gruppo Germoglio of Modena, Italy.

Canto Two
The Issue

As she awakens, Savitri's whole life passes before her mind's eye: her childhood, her youth, her fateful meeting with Satyavan, the last twelve months of love lived with him in the shadow of Death. One year ago she was forewarned of the coming of this fateful day. She has not shared this knowledge with Satyavan or his family. Those around her know nothing of the inner burden that she is bearing. She, a divine being, has taken a human birth in order to save humanity from the grip of Ignorance and Death. With her she has brought her native heavenly Bliss, but here on earth she has to face what all human beings face: pain and grief and the death of their loved ones. But as the fateful day dawns Savitri calls on her inner strength to transform her grief and pain into a powerful weapon which she will use to change earth-destiny. She knows that the destiny of the body can be changed by the will of the Soul. As an incarnation of the Supreme Divine Mother, she is able to transform the existing world-order and claim the victory of Light over Darkness, of Life and Love over Death.

Canto Three
The Yoga of the King:
The Yoga of the Soul's Release

Savitri has taken birth as a human being in response to the deep need and desire of the Earth, which has been embodied in Aswapati, her human father: a rishi-king who masters all his life-energies and offers them to the Supreme Divine Mother, Shakti of Lord Brahma, the Creator, the Goddess of Truth. He worships her one-pointedly for eighteen years, hoping to win from her the boon of one hundred sons, who will be able to save the earth and humanity. This highly developed spiritual being has descended from higher realms to bring a greater light of knowledge and power to the earth. In the first stage of his Yoga, with the blessings of the Divine Mother in her aspects of Wisdom, Discernment, Intuition and Revelation his soul is liberated from Ignorance, bringing about a first transformation of his mind and body which enables him to draw the energies that can transmute an entire age of humanity.

Canto Four
The Secret Knowledge

At this high level of development, Aswapati can see yet higher levels of achievement before him. He understands that human beings are not only mortal, bound by death and ignorance: a greater existence lives within each of us. The 'peak experiences' which come to us occasionally are indications of its presence within us, guarding our future destiny. That being does not die with the death of the body: it is our immortal Origin. But meanwhile earthly existence is dominated by unconsciousness and struggle. Only the Immortal beings living on higher levels of existence are able to see the great future which lies in store. From their heights they are guiding the Earth along the winding road of evolution to its great and blissful fulfilment, when the Supreme Transcendent Being will take possession of his material house and earth-matter shall grow unexpectedly divine. The Powers of the Spirit who inhabit the highest levels of existence and the Earth Nature ruling the manifested world are secretly collaborating to bring about this transformation. This whole world is the playground of the One supreme and his Conscious-Force, the Mother, the Two-in-One. They play out their drama here in the universe with us for roles. He moves here as Soul, she as Nature. The Lord has become the human soul, the Traveller through time. The Timeless One has consented to incarnate in Time so that this world may manifest the unveiled Divine and the seed of Divinity may blossom throughout the material Universe.

Canto Five
The Yoga of the King:
The Yoga of the Spirit's Freedom and Greatness

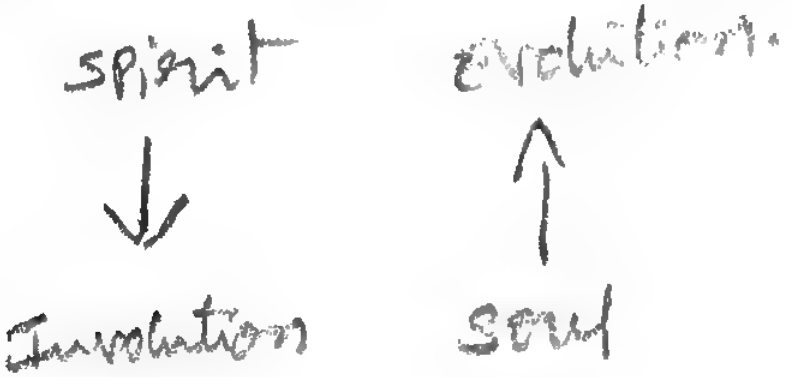
Aswapati is the first human being to be granted this Secret Knowledge, which gives him a new understanding of the truths underlying earthly existence. In its light, he conceives a great Hope, a new intense Aspiration: the divine states he has glimpsed on higher levels of existence must become normal here on earth. The whole world must be transformed and become Divine. He consecrates himself entirely to bringing about this great change. In response to this intense aspiration comes a powerful descent which brings about a second transformation of his human nature. He becomes aware of a secret Nature which uses the power of Mind to rule the borderline between earth and the subtle inner worlds. She submits to Aswapati and shows him an image of the entire Creation as a golden ladder linking the highest levels of Spirit and the lowest levels of Matter, allowing the soul to move upwards and downwards between the Spirit's extremes. Aswapati also perceives a last highest world where all other worlds meet, harmonised and unified by a reconciling Wisdom which fulfils the hidden Truths of each of them. He perceives the continents and homelands of the subtle worlds and is able to enter and explore them. He crosses the border into another Space and Time.

Book Two
The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds

Canto One
The World-Stair

Entering the subtle universe of the Unknown, Aswapati is shown all its vastness and variety in a single view: all the symbols of the Spirit's Reality offer themselves to his experience in all their marvel and multiplicity and all the intensity of their beautiful or terrible delight, becoming new portions of himself. Only one thing is missing there: 'the sole timeless Word that carries eternity in its lonely sound ... the absolute index to the Absolute.'

He sees that all the planes and worlds of existence are arranged in a hierarchy, mounting up from the base of Matter and ascending into the unknowable summits of the Spirit: the great World-Stair which the Spirit has descended in the course of Involution, up which the Soul has to ascend in the course of Evolution. All the worlds are interconnected in a great chain and influence each other. This stair of the gradations of Being and Consciousness is within each of us. It links the lowest levels of Inconscience with the highest levels of Superconscience and makes possible the return journey of the human soul from its adventure of birth in the world of matter. Aswapati starts to mount the giant stair of Nature.



Canto Two
The Kingdom of Subtle Matter

Aswapati enters the World of Subtle Matter, the closest to our own. He finds it to be a realm of wonder and delight, of lovelier forms and subtler senses than those of our world. All that we dream of achieving here on earth is already mapped out in full detail there. Its lines form a protective shield for our world, intercepting the down-pouring of powerful higher energies and filtering them to us in doses that we can bear and assimilate. Those Powers from above are the origin of all creative movements of Beauty, Delight and Grace experienced here, the source of all true Art. The subtle physical embodiment is the radiant vehicle of the Soul after it has shed the grosser body. It becomes progressively finer and subtler to carry the soul to higher and higher worlds until at last only the eternal being's first transparent robe is left. When the soul must return and resume its mortal load, then the subtle body becomes heavier and denser. The material universe has been manifested first in subtle substance. Earth-matter is packed with the essence of all higher worlds, and their powers must eventually emerge from it. But although delightful on its summits, its lower levels are dangerous. The unconsciousness of earth-matter has originated from there. It too is a physical world and cares only for form. It may offer deceptively beautiful forms to dangerous forces such as the demon and the vital snake. And as a world of form and appearance, it is too limited to satisfy Aswapati's seeking. He is impelled to move further in his quest.

Canto Three
The Glory and the Fall of Life

Aswapati enters the domains of Life on a level which corresponds to our own life-experience of doubt and endless seeking and a spirit of adventure which cares only for variety, regardless of danger, fall and pain. Life indulges all moods: self-pity, ambition, exultation, rapture, but is ever dissatisfied. She dreams of a lost happiness and beauty and strives to regain them; but although she is longing for bliss her steps lead her into a hell of grief and suffering. But Aswapati is shown that Life's true native home is divine and full of Bliss. He is shown the beautiful worlds of griefless life: their heavenly joy and love, their innocent youthfulness, their dynamism and endless delight. He can see them but he is unable to enter them: his nature is still too close to earth-nature, our unquiet life. Our nature and substance are unable to experience those higher worlds in their purity. How has the griefless life become the life we know? Aswapati sees that when earth was only sea and sky and stone, her young gods longed for the release of the souls that were sleeping immersed in matter, insentient, unable to express their divinity. In response to their aspiration, the great-winged Goddess of Life left her native light to pour out her beauty and bliss on the material universe, hoping to fill a fair new world with joy. The earth began to blossom, animals and human beings appeared. But while the magic gift was on its way a dark power intervened. Now in our world, Life is no longer free and blissful but subject to the domination of Matter and Death.

Canto Four
The Kingdoms of the Little Life

Aswapati finds himself in an uncertain and unsure world which has been born from the meeting of Life with Matter. The original harmony of Matter is disturbed by Life's seeking to escape from her imprisonment. That pressure compels an awakening of the unconscious force in matter. Aswapati witnesses the emergence of three levels of living beings: first tiny short-lived entities guided by sensation who seem hardly alive, hardly able to survive; next, the much more energetic and dynamic animal creation ranging from huge forms to very small ones, from reptiles and insects to mammals and beings who have a human form but not yet a human consciousness, banding together for safety against a hostile environment and warring with their neighbours. Then he perceives the first appearance of a bodily mind which is able to form self-conscious individuals. Led by this earth-bound mind, Life's play becomes limited and monotonous. Emerging from the Kingdoms of the Little Life, Aswapati sees the Stair of Existence like a huge bridge across the dark gulfs of unconsciousness, emerging from a formless emptiness and jutting out into an emptiness of Soul. He sees Life as a little light born in a great darkness, not knowing where it has come from or where it must go.

Canto Five
The Godheads of the Little Life

Aswapati sees this restricted world of the Little Life as an unhappy corner in eternity. Wanting to understand more deeply the secret of its existence he tries to discern the Power that has made it and to grasp the creative Idea which has brought it into existence. He plunges his powerful gaze of consciousness through the mist of obscurity which surrounds it. As if lit up by a searchlight, a multitude of tiny primitive entities appear moving about before his eyes: elves, imps, goblins, genii and others, half-animal, half-god in their appearance and their nature. He sees them at work behind the veil, prompting, impelling, pushing, perverting. Their work only seems to spoil, deform and pervert, and they amuse themselves in the process. Their activities are not confined to their own world but extend to other worlds also including ours. Wherever there is narrowness, chaos and obscurity, these petty beings cast their influence. They lurk in the unconscious and half-conscious parts of man and lead him astray. The earth is not a closed system; it is open to the action of Powers from other worlds. Not a structured typal world like others, it is a field of Evolution and Progress. On Earth all powers have to move through strife and struggle towards an eventual Harmony and Perfection. The way is long and leads through belts of Inconscience and Ignorance and Ill-will. But the Divine inhabits every corner of his universe. His Will leads its movement and assures its eventual successful fulfilment in Freedom and Light.

Canto Six
The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Life

Leaving the realms of the Little Life, Aswapati moves on through the astral chaos, a dark and hostile region peopled with shadowy and misleading shapes, a realm of baseless and insignificant lives, in which the only sure Light to be found is the flame of his own Spirit. Eventually, as if passing through a dark tunnel, he emerges in the kingdom of the morning star, with its promise of a wider light. There follows the light of a Sun in which Life is able to establish a world which, although fragmentary and incomplete, allows some outbreak of secret Spirit and some response in Life and Matter. Aswapati sees that this realm of Greater Life inspires our vaster hopes, and its forces have made landings on our globe. All that we seek for is prefigured there, and all that we have not yet dreamed of seeking for, but which must one day be born in human hearts in order for the Timeless to be fulfilled in matter. Aswapati sees all the great achievements of the Life Power realised there, a universe of truths and myths. But he also sees that Reality is hidden from her, she lacks eternity, misses the infinite. Her soul is weeping within her, ever unsatisfied, unable to capture her one Beloved. Aswapati tries to find a way out of her complex enchantments, but cannot find any escape. This Greater Life does not provide what he is seeking: a Power which can enable life on earth to become divine.

Canto Seven
The Descent into Night

If even the most sublime levels of Life do not provide the solution Aswapati is searching for, where is it to be found? In order to find the cause of the world-failure he has become aware of, with a calm mind and detached heart he turns his gaze away from the visible face of Nature towards the invisible vastnesses of the infinity from which our universe has been born. All the worlds have been built by its unconscious breath, and our waking thoughts are the outputs of its dreams. Thus he is able to see the evil lurking at the roots of Life in the form of a huge serpent which raises its head and looks into his eyes. He becomes aware of a hidden Power which seems to be giving birth to the world and at the same time destroying it. He feels a fatal Influence spreading everywhere and pursuing the immortal spirit, casting the haunting finger of death on all creatures and a dark shadow of error, grief and pain upon the soul's spontaneous will for truth and joy and light. He sees the changed face of Life – her beauty and her yearning heart, but also the dreadful Powers that drive her moods and make her spread pain everywhere. He goes deeper and deeper. All alone in the all-swallowing Night, he loses all hope and feels the approach of a terrible fear, threatening him with an eternity of inhuman and intolerable pain. But he endures, stills the vain terror, the smothering coils of agony. Then peace returns. He succeeds in mastering the tides of Nature. With his bare spirit, he faces naked Hell.

Canto Eight
The World of Falsehood, the Mother of Evil and the Sons of Darkness

Then Aswapati is able to see into the hidden heart of Night. It is a spiritless blank Infinity, a Nature denying Truth, wanting to abolish God. There is no Light, no divine Soul there; Evil and Pain are busy erecting their own hellish world where Titans, Demons and the rest of the nether host rule. Aswapati's gaze pierces through the heavy gloom and sees a vague and limitless Shape seated on all-swallowing Death, trident in hand: the Mother of Evil. This aspect of Life was born into a state of soulless Matter, when the heart of Time was a spiritless hollow. She wanted to awaken the mystic truth sleeping in all things, but from the darkness of bottomless Night a different response came: a seed of perversion gave rise to a monstrous birth of Ignorance. A nameless Power arose, immense and alien to our universe. Life became a huge and hungry Death; the Spirit's Bliss was changed to cosmic pain; Death, Pain, and Falsehood distorted the original design of Creation. An antagonist Energy has seized the place of the eternal Mother and tries to hold humanity back at the animal level. But despite her opposition the One continues to grow in humanity. Carefully guarding the flame of his divine Spirit, Aswapati penetrates to the last locked subconscient's floor, where he finds the secret key of Nature's change. Hell dissolves. Soul lights up the conscious body with its ray, Matter and Spirit mingle and become one.

Canto Nine
The Paradise of the Life-Gods

Immediately Aswapati's being is projected into the Paradise of the Life-Gods. Immersed in Light, perpetually divine, unmoved by fear and grief and the shocks of Fate, free from all adverse circumstance, that world lives in a jewel-rhythm of the laughter of God and lies on the breast of universal love. After the anguish of his soul's long strife Aswapati at last finds calm and heavenly rest. The wounds suffered by his warrior nature in the dark lower worlds are healed by the embraces of pure blissful divine Energies. He sees forms that can make the power of vision divine, listens to music that can immortalise the mind and make the heart as wide as infinity. There glorious subtle senses, able to respond to heights of unimagined happiness, transform his aura into a glow of joy which makes his body shine like a sunlit sky. Now the substance of his body can draw spiritual power from the experience of the senses. His earth-nature stands reborn, a comrade of heaven. He is bathed in a giant drop of the unknowable Bliss and bears the rapture which the gods experience. Immortal pleasure purifies him in its waves and turns his strength into an undying power. Now, for Aswapati, Immortality has conquered Time and is supporting his Life-force.

Canto Ten
The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Little Mind

The delights of this Life-Paradise cannot detain for long the wideness of Aswapati's soul, which now asks all infinity as its home. Above him he sees large lucent realms of Mind. But first he enters a twilight tract of dim and shifting rays which separates the sentient flow of Life from the equilibrium of Thought, a place where Knowledge and Ignorance meet. Above this level, Aswapati escapes into a realm of early Light, ruled by a half-risen sun from whose rays the full orb of human mind is born. That realm is served by a three-bodied trinity: First, a pygmy thought, needing to live in bounds, forever stooping to hammer fact and form: the Physical Mind; Next a rash Intelligence, the Vital Mind: though often carried away by wishful thinking and delusion, this energetic and enthusiastic power sometimes catches insights which calm intelligence misses. The third power is Reason, the strongest and wisest of the three, who uses her lens and measuring rod and probe, trying to understand the objective universe around her. Her toil is inconclusive but useful to us. But the little Mind is tied to little things, and cannot reveal higher Truths. One day a greater Gnosis must look out on the world and illumine the deep heart of self and things, bringing a timeless knowledge to Mind, the true aim to Life, and a close to the Ignorance.

Canto Eleven
The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Mind

Aswapati goes beyond the limits of human Mind into a space where Thought is supported by a Vision beyond thought. He sees high above him the splendours of ideal Mind, the origin of all that we are, pregnant with the endless more we must become. Those realms are far from our yearning and our labour and our call, but since our secret selves are closely related to them intimations and glimpses from there sometimes flash across the awakened soul. Aswapati enters their immortal air. From here he has descended on his mission to uplift earth. Here he can drink again from his pure and mighty source. From here he can see great stairs of thought climbing up to heights where the last peaks of Time touch eternity's skies and Nature speaks to the Spirit's absolute. First comes a triple realm of ordered thought, closely related to our human mind. He sees the master-builders, the arch-masons who have built our finite material world, the high architects of possibility whose vision has made figure and number a key to everything that exists and put each thing and movement in the manifestation into its appropriate place. Yet higher, the sovereign Kings of Thought are enthroned. They grasp the imperative commands of the creator Self and channel them to lower levels of existence. Here the mind's wisdom ceases, but it is not the end of existence and creation. Aswapati has to go still further, for the Truth he is seeking lies beyond.

Canto Twelve
The Heavens of the Ideal

The Ideal which Aswapati is seeking for beckons him higher. Each step he takes reveals a new luminous world. Each stage of the soul's ascent takes the form of a permanent heaven, a rung in the mighty stairway of Existence. At each end of the steps he sees arrayed the heavens of ideal Mind. On one side glimmer the lovely kingdoms of the deathless Rose, embodying the ideal of Beauty and Bliss which lies behind our life. When its bud is born in our human hearts our souls open to felicity. On the other side of the eternal stairs the mighty kingdoms of the deathless Flame aspire to reach the Being's absolutes, calling our souls into a vaster air of ascending Force and Might. Aswapati is able to move freely through all these kingdoms of the Ideal; he accepts their beauty and their greatness, but does not remain in any of them, for each one presents only an intense but partial light as the ultimate Truth, the key to perfection and passport to Paradise. Beyond are realms where those absolutes meet and embrace but none is willing to sacrifice its separate identity in order to find its own soul in the world's single soul. Aswapati passes on towards a diviner sphere where the radiant children of Eternity dwell in the immutable and inviolate Truth, for ever united and inseparable on the wide spiritual height where all are one. That is the goal which he is aiming for. ✓

Canto Thirteen
In the Self of Mind

At last Aswapati is faced with an empty sky where the climbing stair of the worlds seems to pause. There Silence listens to the Voice of the universe, but offers no response to the soul's endless question, to its hopes. He stands alone with the enormous Self of Mind which holds all life in a corner of its vastness. It does not pay any attention to or take any part in the movements in the world which has sprung from it. Aswapati has come in contact with the unmoving Cosmic Self on the level of Mind. His own mind reflects this vast quietness which is the secret base of thought. Silence is the mystic birthplace of the soul. He feels that he can remain forever in this Silence, for now he has won the ultimate Self, the ultimate Silence. His soul is at peace, it knows and is one with the cosmic whole.

But suddenly a luminous finger reveals to his mind that nothing can be known: he must reach the source from which all knowledge comes. All that mind sees is real, but its sight is untrue, unreliable and misleading. The whole universe now appears unreal to him, a nothingness. His spirit's quest seems to be barred from the infinite Self and Spirit, caught in a world where all beings must die to live and live only to die, a world revolving in issueless cycles: never progressing, never learning, never becoming more than what it was when it first began. It seems as if existence is nothing but a prison, from which extinction is the only escape. Can this be the end of his quest?

Canto Fourteen
The World-Soul

A secret answer to Aswapati's seeking appears: in a distant shimmering background of Mind-Space is seen a glowing mouth, an opening which seems to offer an escape into some hidden mystery, leading through many layers of formless voiceless self towards the last depth of the world's heart. It seems to beckon him, promising a message from the world's deep soul. He feels drawn to his lost spiritual home, feels the closeness of a waiting love and enters into a dim passage. Travelling led by a mysterious sound, a hidden call to unforeseen delight, he enters into the World of Soul. The silent Soul of all the world is here. This is the source of all finite life. Here all is soul or made of sheer soul-stuff. Here he is shown beings who once wore forms on earth, now sleeping in shining chambers, gathering back their bygone selves and planning the map of their future destiny as they await the adventure of a new birth. He passes on along a road of pure interior light to the source of all things, human and divine. There is revealed to him the sole omnipotent Goddess, ever-veiled: the supreme Mother. As soon as he glimpses her, his spirit is made a vessel of her force. He stretches out to her his folded hands of prayer. She responds by drawing aside her eternal veil for a moment: he sees the large and luminous depths of her mysterious eyes and the mystic outline of her face. Overwhelmed with bliss, his soul gives a cry of adoration and surrender as he falls unconscious at her feet.

Canto Fifteen
The Kingdoms of the Greater Knowledge

After a timeless moment of the soul, Aswapati returns from the depths to awareness of the surface fields of existence and becomes aware again of the passing of time. But everything he has ever perceived and lived seems very distant. He is aware only of himself, waiting to hear the Voice of the Mother. He has risen out of the sphere of Mind. He has left the realm of Nature. He is living in the colourless purity of his own self, a plane of undetermined spirit. Then, out of the neutral silence of his soul he moves into its fields of Power and of Calm and sees the Powers that stand above the worlds. He passes through the realms of the supreme creative Idea, still seeking the summit of created things and the almighty source of cosmic change. On the last step to the supernal birth, he walks along a narrow edge of extinction and thrills with the presence of the Ineffable. All but the ultimate Mystery becomes his field. He enters the high realm where no untruth can come. There, beings of a wider consciousness are his friends, the Gods converse with him. Thoughts rise in him no earthly mind can hold; he is able to scan the secrets of the Overmind and bear the rapture of the Oversoul. Living on the borders of the Supramental Empire of the Sun, he links creation to the Eternal's sphere. His actions frame the movements of the Gods, his will takes up the reins of cosmic Force. He has reached the summit of the World-Stair.

Book Three
The Book of The Divine Mother

Canto One
The Pursuit of the Unknowable

Aswapati has explored all the planes of existence and reached the summit of the World-Stair, but he has not yet found what he was looking for. He has glimpsed the Supreme Mother and surrendered himself to her, but now the world seems empty to him because he does not feel her Presence in it. His efforts for Knowledge now seem worthless, for all knowledge seems to end in the Unknowable. His efforts to rule seem worthless, a trivial achievement which time will prove meaningless. A silence settles on his striving heart and he turns towards the call of the Ineffable, the Inexpressible. He is aware of a Being calling to him. Nothing can satisfy him but the delight of that Presence. He is carried forward, ascending without pause, aware of a signless vague Immensity. Then comes a pause. He is faced with a tremendous choice. He must either abandon everything he has been and has grown towards, or accept to be transformed into a self of That which has no name. The separate self must melt away or be reborn into a Truth which the mind cannot grasp. Aswapati perceives the Godhead of the whole and sees the universal cycles being swallowed up into its invisible sea without reaching any solution, only to rise from it again and again. This stark Reality seems to be the last response to the passionate search of Aswapati's soul: it has no kinship with the universe, no partner, no equal. It is simply a pure existence, one and unique, unutterably sole, immutably the same, infinite, eternal, unthinkable, alone.

Canto Two
The Adoration of the Divine Mother

As the soul moves close to its self-discovery there comes an absolute stillness; sense is swallowed up into it; all that the Mind has known seems unreal. Only an Inconceivable is left. There is liberation from all appearances. But that is not the end of the soul's journey. This escape is not the crown for its labours; it has a goal to fulfil, a mystery to solve. The silence and release are only a gateway on the journey. Behind the apparent zero is the face of the immortal being who is to be revealed in the forms of this material World.

As Aswapati experiences this truth, the Presence he has yearned for draws close. He feels a being of Wisdom, Power and Delight embracing Nature, World and Soul. From this Being a beautiful lustre flows into Aswapati's heart, touching through him all sentient beings. All turns felicitous and beautiful. This is the Mother of All, the mediatrix between Earth and the Supreme. All opposites are preparing her supreme harmony. She, the Divine Mother, stands at the head of Time, She is the bright heart of the Unknowable. All Nature calls to Her alone to heal with her touch all the pain and longing of life and to kindle true aspiration in human hearts. Through her all our separate selves shall become one. She is the way and the goal. Her rapture fills the limbs of Aswapati. All his seekings are fulfilled in Her. But his freedom alone cannot satisfy him. He seeks Her light and bliss for the whole earth and all humanity.

Canto Three
The House of the Spirit and the New Creation

Aswapati knows that only the Light and Bliss of the Supreme Mother can bring about the Divine Life for Earth which he is calling for. He must bring her healing touch of love and truth and joy into the darkness of the suffering world. In intense aspiration he prays to her, but no response comes. He feels all the resistance of our human world and the inconscient base of Matter, the ignorant refusal in the very origin of things. He searches his own nature to purify it fully and succeeds in tearing desire out of himself entirely, offering the vacant place to the higher powers. In response to his renunciation a last and mightiest transformation comes over him. Infinity swallows him into limitless trance. His soul abandons our universe and reaches its transcendent source in the House of Spirit. There he feels the Mother embracing all existence, blessing it with Oneness. From her embrace he sees a new creation arise – the Divine World he has been aspiring for, in all its glorious details. He himself is taken into that new world and becomes a part of it. Then from that future world, he becomes again aware of our world as it still is. On the untransformed earth he sees his body lying in mystic sleep. He becomes aware of himself as two beings, one wide and free above, the other struggling and bound on earth and realises that a link between these two can connect the two worlds. His heart is lying halfway between them, intensely calling to the Mother, awaiting her response.

Canto Four
The Vision and the Boon

Suddenly a mystic Form embraces Aswapati's earthly body, a boundless heart is near his heart. The One whom he has adored and worshipped enters into him. She tells him: "O Son of Strength, you have reached the very peaks of Creation; all you have gained is yours to keep, but do not ask for more. Do not pray for my descent in a world that is still inconscient. Humanity is still too weak to bear the weight of the Infinite. I am not asking you to merge into the Immobile. I know that you cannot rest satisfied as long as Death is still unconquered on the earth, so continue to live and work for my all-knowing purpose, however long it takes. The change you are asking for demands that human beings must change. Do not be impatient. My light will be with you. Ask only one boon: that your spirit may grow ever greater. Ask only one joy: to uplift humanity. All things shall change in God's transfiguring hour". But Aswapati's heart replies to her, "How can I live content with human life, now that I have seen your glory? You have set a hard task to your sons. How long must we go on toiling? If we are doing your work, why do we not see a gleam of your light? Where are the signs of your approaching Victory? I know that your creation cannot fail; I have seen a vision of a great destruction preparing the coming of a new race of your children. I know that their tread will one day change the suffering earth. Will you not incarnate your Force and send a living form of yourself to earth, and let one great act unlock the doors of Fate?" The Mother accepts Aswapati's prayer, and he returns to earth.

Book Four
The Book of Birth and Quest

Canto One
The Birth and Childhood of the Flame

Earth continues her dance of adoration around the journeying sun and the six seasons play out their symbolic pageant of the year: Summer paces across the land with his torrid heat and light; then Raintide bursts in with its storms and life-giving streams; Autumn arrives with her glorious moons and splendid lotus pools; Winter and Dew-time lay their calm cool hands on the bosom of half-sleeping Nature; then at last Spring embraces the earth like a young god. At this moment, when all Nature is at beauty's festival, Savitri takes birth. Returning from the transcendent planes she takes up her divine unfinished task. Once more the Mother-wisdom which is constantly at work in Nature's breast to make dumb Matter conscious of the divine puts on a human shape. At first the infant lies passive in the protective arms of a guardian Power. Slowly the link with her soul becomes sure and remembrance of her Origin takes shape within her. Even in her childish movements can be felt the nearness of a higher light. As she grows, the Power within her shapes her sense in a deeper mould, her thoughts reflect the truth of her soul. Her gaze perceives all forms as shapes of living selves, and she feels one with a greater Nature. As she matures, a lovelier body forms than earth has ever known before. When the passing years bring the fullness of her beauty and grace, the body which holds this greatness seems like an image made of heaven's transparent light.

Canto Two
The Growth of the Flame

The land where Savitri is born and grows up is full of the greatest works of God and Man, a land of majestic mountains and wide plains beneath the sun, of giant rivers flowing to vast seas, a field of great creations and spiritual hush, where Nature seems a dream of the Divine and beauty and grace and grandeur have their home, where great influences and ancient Godheads surround the growing child, whose presence seems to draw the powers of future divinities closer. There the knowledge of the thinker and the seer saw the unseen and thought the unthinkable, art and beauty sprang from the human depths and the harmony of a rich culture taught the soul to soar beyond things known, inspiring to greater achievements. Philosophy, sculpture and painting, architecture, music and dance, crafts and poetry: she takes in all these things to nourish her nature, but these alone cannot fill her-wide Self; she looks to greater possibilities. She feels within her a boundless knowledge and a higher happiness still locked in the world and yearning to be expressed. She looks for natures strong enough to bear her greatness, her beauty and her bliss and her vast power to love. Only a few respond. Even the closest partners of her thoughts cannot match the measure of her soul. She is their leader and the queen of their hearts and souls, close to their lives and yet divine and far beyond their reach. Amongst these hearts that answered to her call, none can stand up as her equal and life-partner. Her spirit dwells amongst those encircling lives, apart in herself, awaiting her hour of fate.

Canto Three
The Call to the Quest

On an exceptionally beautiful spring morning, King Aswapati, walking in his garden, feels again the mighty flame of aspiration for a perfect life on earth for men and shadowless bliss for suffering human hearts. A Voice seems to ask, "O human beings, how long will you continue to tread the circling tracks of mind around your little selves and petty things? You were not made for a changeless littleness. A greater destiny is awaiting you. You carry a strong creative power within you. You are meant to bring about a great change on earth, to make life the expression of the million-bodied Oneness. The earth is suffering; she longs to be delivered by the greatness of her sons, but the flame of aspiration is too dim in human hearts. The Gods are still too few in human forms." Then, like a powerful answer from the gods, Aswapati sees his daughter Savitri approaching. In a moment of revelation he sees through the familiar face and limbs the great spirit who has taken birth as his child. He is inspired to tell her, "Somewhere on the earth your unknown lover is waiting for you, the second self your nature needs. Your soul has strength and does not need any other guide than the One within you. Go, depart where love and destiny call you. Venture into the world to find your mate." His words enter into Savitri like a Mantra and a seed of great change is sown in her. She turns to vastnesses not yet her own. The day sinks to evening, the moon rises; when dawn comes the palace wakes to her absence: Savitri has left to search the spacious world.

Canto Four
The Quest

The world ways open up before Savitri. At first her mind is absorbed by the strangeness of new scenes, but as she travels further a deeper consciousness wells up within her which takes all clans and peoples for her own, until the whole destiny of mankind becomes hers. The cities and rivers and plains she passes through come to her like memories from the past. Even she feels that the purpose of her journey is not new: she is tracing again a journey often made. The wheels of her chariot are being guided by hooded divinities. She passes through the capitals of powerful city-states and slumbers in the palaces of kings, but during the day she passes through hamlets and villages and sees the peasants toiling in the fields. Leaving the populated lands she turns to free and griefless spaces not yet troubled by human joys and fears, experiencing the unspoiled childhood of the primeval earth, and continues her journey through wide wind-stirred grasslands and green woods, past rough-browed hills and long silver rivers, through lovely valleys and alongside ocean beaches. She halts in hermitages at night or rests in the open on the banks of rivers, in desert spaces or solitary tracts. Months pass, summer is approaching, but she has still not found the one predestined face which she is seeking.

Book Five
The Book of Love

Canto One
The Destined Meeting-Place

But now the destined spot and hour are close. Unknowingly she has come near to her goal. Nothing truly happens by chance; what seem to be chance happenings are only appearances. Everything is led by an Omniscience, and events take place at the appointed place and time. Savitri's road leads up into a highland world where the air is soft and delicate, the surroundings green and delightful. She feels a sense of expectation, of coming change. She is surrounded by high mountain peaks, below them emerald woods and pale rivers like threads of pearl. A gentle breeze stirs meadows of flowers. A white crane stands motionless, peacocks and parrots show their bright colours, the soft moan of a dove is heard, and vividly coloured drakes are seen swimming in silvery pools. Human beings have not come to disturb this lovely nature. At the head of the valley a matted forest-head pushes up to heaven, as if a blue-throated ascetic is peering out from his mountain cell. This is the scene which the Mother has chosen for Savitri's hour of happiness. Here in this solitude, far from the world, she will begin to play her part in the world's life of joy and strife. Here she will discover the mystic courts of love, the secret doors of beauty and surprise, the temple of sweetness and the fiery aisle. Savitri is a stranger on the sorrowful roads of Time, immortal, but wearing the human yoke of death and fate. Here Love will meet her in the wilderness.

Canto Two
Satyavan

The road which Savitri is following turns towards human habitations. In a sunlit recess upon the forest verge a single narrow path runs straight as an arrow amongst the giant trees. There she gets her first sight of the one for whom she has come so far, standing against the dark background, lit by a golden ray, the joy of life in his face, his head that of a youthful rishi, his body that of a lover and a king. At first she sees him simply as a part of the beautiful scene. She might have passed by on chance ignorant roads and missed Heaven's call, the aim of her life, but suddenly her heart looks out at him, and recognises the one who is nearer to her than her own heart-strings. Shocked awake, it moves in her breast and she cries out like a bird, reining in her horses: the chariot stops suddenly. Satyavan's soul responds, enchanted by the sound of her voice, the sight of her perfect face. He turns to this vision of beauty like the sea to the moon, and adores a new divinity in things. He approaches her across the lovely grass, and the two gaze at each other. Savitri's inner vision recognises his eyes from her past, eyes that have claimed her soul, known through many lives. Satyavan sees in her look the promise of his future, the key of all his aims. In these great spirits, Love brought down power out of eternity, to make of life his new immortal base. A moment passed that was a ray of eternity. An hour began that would give birth to a new age of the world.

Canto Three
Savitri and Satyavan

Satyavan speaks first to Savitri and asks her name. He tells her that he has seen many magical images and voices in the forest, so he could imagine that she is an immortal being who has driven her horses from the heavenly realm of Lord Indra, but he hopes that she is a mortal, and that she can enjoy the refreshment of earthly food and pure water from the fast-flowing torrent nearby. He invites her to visit his simple hermit-home in the forest. In response she asks about his name and his family. He looks like a prince – why is he here in the forest? Satyavan tells her about the blindness and exile of his father King Dyumatsena and about his own life in the forest amongst the wild birds and animals. In Nature he felt a divine touch and a call, but was not able to embrace the body of the worshipped God, could not clasp in his hands the World-Mother's feet. "Now", he says, "you have brought me that golden link. Descend from your chariot, enter my life: it will be your chamber and your shrine." Savitri replies, "O Satyavan, I have heard you and I know; I know that you and only you are he." She comes down from her chariot and gathers an armful of flowers from the forest-verge with which she weaves a simple garland. Placing it around his neck she bows and touches his feet, offering herself and her life to him alone. He bows and takes her joined hands in his. Before the sun, their witness and marriage-fire, the wedding of the eternal Lord and Spouse takes place again on earth in human forms. In a new act of the drama of the world, the united Two begin a greater age. Satyavan turns back to his parent's hermitage and Savitri swiftly returns to Madra to inform her father Aswapati about her meeting and her choice.

Book Six
The Book of Fate

Canto One
The Word of Fate

Narad, the heavenly sage who can move freely between earth and heaven and is able to see into the Past, Present and Future, leaves Vishnu's Paradise to visit earth. He descends to Aswapati's palace in Madra, where the King and Queen welcome him. As they listen to the sage's chant Savitri arrives, changed by the halo of her love. When she tells her father about Satyavan, Aswapati asks Narad's blessing on their union. But some hesitation in the sage's reply alarms her mother, who demands to be told the truth about her daughter's choice. Pressed by her, Narad reveals that Satyavan is a marvel of the meeting earth and heavens, fully worthy to be Savitri's mate, but that he has only one more year to live: "This day returning, Satyavan must die." Shocked, Savitri's mother insists that her daughter must make another choice, but Savitri replies, "My spirit has glimpsed the glory for which it came. I shall walk with Satyavan like gods in Paradise. If only for a year, that year is all my life. But I know that is not all my fate, only to live and love awhile and die. I know now who I am, and who he is I love. I have seen God smile at me in Satyavan; I have seen the Eternal in a human face." Neither the King nor the Queen nor Sage Narad can answer her. Silent they sit and look into the eyes of Fate.

Canto Two
The Way of Fate and the Problem of Pain

Savitri's mother challenges Narad: "Is it your God who has made this cruel law of Time and Fate, of grief and pain? Why should my beautiful innocent daughter have to suffer like this? Why is there suffering in the world at all? Perhaps there is no God at all, no soul." Narad replies, "The Eternal lives hidden in the soul of the mortal. You are not aware of him because your thought is a light of the Ignorance which hides from you the Immortal's meaning in the world. Pain has a function. If the human heart is not forced to want and weep, it would never learn to climb towards the Sun of divine Truth. The spirit is doomed to pain until man is free. Especially the Great who come to save this suffering world must share its pain. They have to battle with an ancient adversary Force which is the origin of all suffering here. Until the world-redeemer's task is done, life must carry its load of death and sorrow. Learn to bear this great world's law of pain. You will find your way to Bliss at last." Aswapati asks, "I believed that a mighty Power was born with Savitri. Is that Power not stronger than earthly Fate?" Narad answers: "There is a greatness in your daughter's soul which can transform her and the whole world, but it can reach its goal only through suffering. The great are strongest when they stand alone. She alone can save the world. Leave her to her mighty self and Fate." With these words, Narad leaves the earthly scene.

Book Seven
The Book of Yoga

Canto One
The Joy of Union;
the Ordeal of the Foreknowledge of Death
and the Heart's Grief and Pain

Savitri's marriage-procession carries her to the forest hermitage where her parents give her into the care of the blind King Dyumatsena and his Queen and reluctantly leave her to her doom. With great happiness Savitri begins her life with Satyavan. Apart with love, she lives for love alone. But soon summer is followed by rain-tide. Under darkened skies with storm and thunder raging, Savitri remembers the fatal date set by Narad, and the passing of the hours becomes dreadful to her. She feels each day a golden page torn out from her too slender book of love and joy. She sees those around her living happily unconscious of the impending doom, but she can find no peace and stillness within. She has only her violent heart and passionate will to support her through her ordeal. But she reveals nothing on the surface. Those around her see the child they love – they cannot see the suffering woman within. She continues to serve Satyavan's parents and will not allow any task to others that her woman's strength can do. But within her, grief and fear become the food of mighty love. In the dark night as the rainy season approaches its end Savitri's intense grief overshadows her human heart.

Canto Two
The Parable of the Search for the Soul

As Savitri sits awake next to sleeping Satyavan, repressing her grief through the silent hours, a mighty Voice speaks from her being's summits: "Remember why you came on earth; find your soul, your hidden self. In silence seek God's meaning in your depths, then change mortal nature into the divine nature. Cast away thought and sense; let God's vast Truth awaken within you. Then you will see the Eternal embodied in the world, and recognise Him everywhere; everything shall fold you into his embrace. Conquer your heart's throbs; let your heart beat in God. Then you shall embody my Force and vanquish Death." Savitri continues to sit in her motionless posture. She looks into herself and seeks for her soul. The Cosmic Past is revealed to her in a series of dream images: the first steps of Creation, the Soul embodying itself in Matter, Matter slowly learning to think, Space filled with the seeds of Life, and the human Creature being born in Time. She sees that the hidden spirit has done all this in her and marked her out as the centre of a vast scheme to mould humanity into God's own shape. For this vast spiritual change to come about, the heavenly Psyche must be revealed in common nature, rule its thoughts and fill the body and life. She sees that the lower nature still occupies too large a place in her: it veils her Self and must be pushed aside to find her soul.

Canto Three
The Entry into the Inner Countries

In concentration Savitri enters into a hushed stillness away from the busy hum of the Mind; but when she returns to her conscious self, she finds herself unchanged, a lump of Matter and an ignorant mind, limited by the material world. She tries to find a way out of the tangle of the ignorant past where the surface being was taken to be the soul. Then again a Voice speaks to her from the secret heights saying: "You are not seeking the soul for yourself alone, but for the whole of humanity. Man, being human, follows in God's human steps. You must accept the darkness and sorrow of humankind to bring them Light and Bliss. You must discover your heaven-born soul in the material body." Savitri surges out of her physical body, stands a little outside of it, looks into the depths of her subtle being and there in its heart divines her secret Soul. She knocks and presses against the door that guards the inner Life but is opposed by threatening guardian powers; but by persisting she is able to enter the inner worlds, one by one: a realm of dense subtle Matter; then a chaotic space of disordered impulses where Life dips into subconscient darkness; then a flood of violent uncontrolled Life-Force. Further she enters a realm where the Life-Force is chained and controlled by Mind, then a country of fixed mind which claims to offer the single Truth, the eternal Law. She encounters a crowd of divine soul-messengers hurrying to save the world. One of them points to a deep background of the inner world, saying "There you will find the deep cavern of your secret soul." She moves on.

Canto Four
The Triple Soul-Forces

As she ascends towards the dwelling-place of her soul, deep in inner mind Savitri meets three Mother figures, each claiming to be her secret soul. The first is the Mother of Divine Compassion, who bears and comforts the sufferings of all living things, but lacks the strength to save them or change the world. From the lower levels of nature she is echoed by the Man of Sorrows, full of self-pity and hatred. Then Savitri encounters the Mother of Might whose task is to help the unfortunate, save the doomed, to reward the strong and to battle against the hostile forces. Her echo is the arrogant Ego of this great world of desire, who claims earth and the wide heavens for the use of Man. Last she meets the Mother of Light, the power which works for God and leads humanity through death to reach immortal life. She is echoed from the depths by the ignorant mind which refuses to progress. Savitri listens to the Madonnas and their echoes. She promises each of the Mothers that when she has found her soul she will return and bring them what they are lacking. To the Mother of Pity, she will bring Strength, so that her love shall become the powerful bond uniting all humankind. To the Mother of Strength, she will bring Wisdom and Light: fear and weakness will be abolished from human lives and the cry of the ego will fall silent. She tells the Mother of Light that she must nurse man's aspiration for the eternal and bring God down into his body and life. When she returns, the divine family will be born on earth; then there shall be peace and joy, happy force and light in all the worlds.

Canto Five
The Finding of the Soul

As Savitri moves onward seeking the mystic cave where her soul dwells, at first she enters into a night of God. She feels that she herself is nothing, God alone is all. Then, returning to her inner space, she feels a blissful nearness to her goal. Dawn emerges from moonlit twilight and Day arrives. Savitri recognises the mystic cavern in the sacred hill, the dwelling of her secret soul. Entering its great rock doors she passes through room after room, past great figures of gods and symbolic scenes. She feels her identity with all these divine beings. Through a tunnel dug in the last rock she emerges into a house all made of flame and light. Crossing a wall of doorless living fire, there suddenly she meets her secret soul. That immortal being puts out a small portion of herself into each human heart to face the ordeals of earthly life. Here in this chamber of flame and light the secret deity and its human part meet, recognise each other and become one.

Savitri finds herself once more human, seated beside sleeping Satyavan. In intense concentration she calls to the Mighty Mother to enter her body and make it Her home. A face and form, a living image of the original Power comes down into her heart and as its feet touch it a mighty movement rocks the inner space. A flaming Serpent rises up to the crown of her head touching each of her subtle centres with its mouth as it stands erect; one by one they awaken, laughing, full of light and bliss. Each contains an image of the Mighty Mother. Each takes on its divine function, transformed.

Canto Six
Nirvana and the Discovery of the All-Negating Absolute

After finding her soul and uniting with it Savitri is serenely happy and her happiness seems to spread all around her. She no longer sees the dark shadow of Fate above Satyavan's head, but a mystic sun, indicating a long and full life. But one night as she is feeling her joy in his embrace as a bridge connecting earth and heaven, a dark abyss suddenly opens up beneath her heart. A denser darkness than the Night envelops heaven and the earth and threatens to abolish her body and soul. Surging past, it leaves her inner world laid waste. But the Voice of Night is followed by a greater Voice of Light. It tells her "Accept to be small and human on earth so that humanity may discover its soul in God. Consent to be nothing and none; cast off your mind, step back from form and name. Annul your individual self so that only God may exist for you." Savitri obeys the voice and looks deeply into herself, leaving everything to the play of nature, observing everything that rises up but especially the origin of her thoughts. Then she rises up out of mind and dedicates everything in her to God's calm. Then everything grows silent. She becomes a silent spirit pervading silent Space. Everything she perceives seems unreal, but she is aware of a hidden Reality which does not allow itself to be perceived. That is the only true Reality. Her individual existence will be dissolved, or she will become whatever that Supreme Reality decides.

Canto Seven
The Discovery of the Cosmic Spirit and the Cosmic Consciousness

Inwardly Savitri has become a mighty nothingness, but outwardly no one notices any change in her: to everyone she is the same perfect Savitri; she does the things that she has always done, pouring out her sweetness and light on the world around, but her mortal ego has perished in God's night: only a body is left, a figure of unreal reality. She feels that at any moment she could cease to exist and her universe will pass away. But this does not happen: her being does not travel towards nothingness but feels some high and hidden Secrecy. At night when she is alone with sleeping Satyavan she turns towards a veiled silent Truth high above. One night a voice speaks from her heart. As it speaks everything changes within her and around her. The world of unreality ceases to exist. All becomes conscious. That indecipherable Reality is no longer mysterious, unknowable, distant; it is her self, the self of all, the consciousness of everything that lives, it is Timelessness and Time, the Bliss of formlessness and form, it is all Love and the One Beloved's arms. All becomes a single immensity. Her spirit sees the world as living God, one with herself and the foundation of everything here. Savitri feels all Nature's happenings as events within her: all beings move and think in her, the superconscient is her native air; Infinity is her movement's natural space. Eternity looks out from her on Time.

Book Eight
The Book of Death

"Canto Three"
Death in the Forest

Awaking at dawn on the fateful day when Satyavan must die, Savitri looks back into her past and relives all that she has been and done in her life. After completing her usual daily tasks, she bows down and prays silently to the Goddess Durga. Then she approaches the Queen mother and obtains her consent to accompany Satyavan into the forest for the first time since she came to the hermitage. Satyavan and Savitri go hand in hand, he happily showing her all the things he loves and calling out to the birds as Savitri, dreading his impending Fate, treasures the sound of his voice, constantly on watch for a dark expected intrusion.

Satyavan starts his work, hewing wood for the hermitage fires of altar and kitchen, happily singing snatches of a sage's chant on the Conquest of Death and the Slaying of Evil. But as he works, he is overcome by terrible pain. He throws away his axe and cries out to Savitri. She takes him in her lap beneath a strong and shady tree, trying to relieve his pain; but his colour changes and he begs her to kiss him as he dies. She presses her lips upon his, but he cannot respond. She grows aware that they are no longer alone. An awful hush has fallen on the place; there is no cry of birds, no voice of beasts. A terror and anguish fills the world. Savitri sees dreadful eyes and the Shadow of an uncaring god. She knows that visible Death is standing there and Satyavan has passed from her embrace.

Book Nine
The Book of Eternal Night

Canto One
Towards the Black Void

Savitri is left alone in the huge wood, Satyavan's corpse on her breast. She does not yet stand up to face the dreadful god. Her soul leans out over the body she loved. Aware of his being still near to hers, she clasps the lifeless form as if to hold his spirit back within its frame. Suddenly a great change comes over her: she becomes aware of her high source, and a great Force from it descends into her and sinks into her soul, taking the symbol form of a great winged angel standing above her, silent and calm. She is filled with heavenly strength. Calmly she lays the dead body on the ground and stands up to meet the god. The two oppose each other with their eyes. Death orders Savitri to release her hold on Satyavan's soul, but she does not respond, until he says, "Woman, thy husband suffers." Then she withdraws her heart's force and stands, ready for whatever will come next. Death stoops down and touches the body. Another luminous Satyavan rises from it and stands between Savitri and the God. Then he moves away. Death follows him and Savitri moves behind the dark god into the perilous spaces beyond. At first she follows them in her body, but then feels that they will escape from her. She flames out of her body, leaving it on the ground. When she returns to awareness the three of them are still moving forward towards a gateway of dark rocks. When Satyavan reaches that borderline, he turns and looks back at Savitri. Death warns her to turn back but she does not respond. Her soul stands up like a shaft of fire and light against the midnight blackness piled in front of them.

Canto Two
The Journey in the Eternal Night and the Voice of the Darkness

Savitri first steps forward into the gloom. The three move on as if in a dream, out of mortal time: present, past and future drown in nothingness as a world of shadows swallows them up. There Mind cannot think, breath cannot breathe, the soul cannot remember or feel itself. The immense refusal of the eternal No falls on Love and Knowledge and the heart's delight. Savitri moves blindly through the gulfs, all alone in the terrible Vastness. She can no longer see the figure of Death nor her luminous Satyavan; a silent gulf opens between them and she falls into abysmal loneliness. For many long hours she endures, alone in the anguish of the void. But she is not vanquished. She becomes aware of a faint inextinguishable gleam, pale but immortal, flickering in the gloom: the light of her own soul. Once more she hears the footsteps of the god and Satyavan's form grows into a luminous shadow. Death threatens Savitri but she, aware of her own immortality, does not respond. Then he tells her, "If you can still hope and still want to love, return to earth. Do not hope to win Satyavan back. But you deserve some reward. Choose a life's hopes for your deceiving prize." Savitri answers him: "Give if you must, or, if you can, refuse: give me whatever Satyavan wished for in his life but did not have." Death bows his head in scornful agreement and promises to restore Dyumatsena's eyesight and his kingdom but then urges Savitri again to return to earth immediately. But she will not turn back. The three figures move on through the dimness.

Book Ten
The Book of the Double Twilight

Canto One
The Dream Twilight of the Ideal

There is no change, no hope of change as they continue to drift through the despairing darkness and deepening gloom. An ineffectual gleam of suffering light dogs their steps like the remembrance of some lost glory. It grows, but seems unreal there; yet it continues to haunt that chill stupendous realm of Nothingness. But eventually Light conquers even by that feeble beam. It drills through the blind dead mass; a golden fire comes in and burns the heart of the Night. The intolerant Darkness draws apart until only a few black remnants stain that Ray. Still a great dragon body sullenly looms, opposing the slow struggling Dawn, but soon it flees down a grey slope of time. Then all the sorrow of the night is dead and Savitri finds herself in a happy misty twilit world filled with exquisite suggestions and vague scenes, vague spirits, vague melodies and elusive forms where nothing remains fixed but everything breathes an unearthly appeal and sweetness. Satyavan, moving ahead of her, seems the centre of all this magical charm. Even the dreadful majesty of Death's face does not darken the lustre of those skies but makes the delicate beauty of that world yet more imperative by contrast. Savitri passes through this realm besieged by delightful bodiless touches, like a thought amidst other floating thoughts. She enjoys its dream-happiness but remains in possession of her soul. Her spirit above sees all, but continues to live for its transcendent task, immutable like a fixed eternal star.

Canto Two
The Gospel of Death and Vanity of the Ideal

Then the Voice of Death peals out, abolishing hope, making the lovely ideal world seem no longer like a morning twilight full of hope and promise but rather the last farewell gleam of a dying day. He tries to convince Savitri that all Ideals are nothing but misleading wishful thinking and can never be realised. He proclaims, "The Ideal cannot live either in heaven or on earth; it is a bright delirium of human hope. You are worshipping ideal and eternal love, but that is only a myth: love is a yearning of your body, a glorious burning of your nerves. It soon passes and leaves two incompatible egos divided by their conflicting thoughts. Death saves you from this and saves Satyavan. He is safe now; do not call him back to the poor petty life of animal Man. Go back to your world. One day you too will experience my endless peace and happy Nothingness." But Savitri replies, "I will not allow your falsehoods to slay my soul. My love is not a hunger of the heart nor a craving of the flesh. It came to me from God and returns to him. Move on, O Death: I do not belong to this world. I cherish God the Fire, not God the Dream." But he replies, "You are a creature of earth and must obey the earthly law. Enjoy what happiness Life allows you, suffer what you must of its toil and grief. You too will come at last to my long calm night of everlasting sleep."

Canto Three
The Debate of Love and Death

Savitri replies, "You are proclaiming misleading and destructive half-truths. I answer you with Truth that saves. This world of Matter has been made by the One, starting from Nothingness and Night. His creative Power made Matter into the body of the Bodiless. Now we are seeing an unfinished world. In a small seed is hidden a great tree; in a tiny gene, a thinking being is contained; dumb material Nature has become conscious. How can you say that there is no spirit, no God? I have claimed the living Satyavan from you for our work. Our lives are God's messengers here on earth." Death says, "You are human. Be the animal that Nature has made you." But Savitri replies, "My humanity is a mask of God, I am the thinking instrument of his power. My heart sees and feels the one Heart beat in everything. My heart can carry the grief of the universe and never lose its peace. It can drink all Delight and never lose the calm of the deep Infinite." "Are you really so strong and free?" Death demands. "Then I will give you whatever brief earthly joys you ask; only Satyavan can never again be yours." Savitri replies, "Give what you can, or what you must. I claim nothing but Satyavan's life." He promises her that she shall have whatever the living Satyavan desired in his heart for Savitri, many beautiful children and a long and happy life with her loving husband. He then again commands her to return to earth. But she answers, "Your promise cannot be fulfilled and earth cannot flower if I return without Satyavan." She moves on through the dimness, Death in front of her, and Satyavan in front of Death, his destiny still undecided.

Canto Four
The Dream Twilight of the Earthly Real (1)

The scene changes as they move into another symbol world, one which reflects the harsh realities of life on earth: dark industrial landscapes filled with toiling multitudes, a tramp of armoured life and the monotonous hum of unchanging thoughts and acts, ever recurring and repeated. Death's voice again pursues the ignorant march of suffering Time. He proclaims, "Where Nature does not change, man cannot change. Mind is man, he cannot move beyond thought, and Mind can never see the soul of God." He tells Savitri, "Turn to God, forget love, forget Satyavan, annul yourself in God's endless peace and bliss. You must die to yourself to reach God. I, Death, am the gate to Immortality." She replies, "How shall I seek rest in endless peace? I am carrying in me the Force of the Mighty Mother and the flaming silence of her heart of love. A lonely freedom cannot satisfy a heart that has grown one with every heart. I represent the aspiring world. I ask my spirit's freedom for earth and men." Death answers Savitri, "Reveal your power, then I will give Satyavan back to you. Or if the Mighty Mother is with you, show me her face, so that I can worship her."

Canto Four
The Dream Twilight of the Earthly Real (2)

Savitri does not reply. A mighty transformation comes over her. The Immortal's lustre which had lit her face overflows, making the air a bright sea. The Incarnation removes its veil. Savitri stands there, a little figure in infinity, yet seems the very house of the Eternal, as if the world's centre was her very soul and all wide space its outer robe. The Power that reigns from her being's summit, the divine Presence sheltered within her lotus secrecy, comes down into her, centre by centre, until the thousand-hooded Serpent Force blazes upwards and clasps the World-Self above. Eternity looks into the eyes of Death. A Voice is heard in the stillness: "I hail you, almighty Death, Darkness of the Infinite. You are my shadow and my instrument. Live a while longer as my instrument. But now stand aside and leave the path of my incarnate Force. Release the Soul of the World, Satyavan." Unconvinced, Death continues to resist. The Mother's intolerable Force weighs on him; his body is eaten by her Light, his Spirit devoured. Recognising that defeat is inevitable, he flees from her dreaded touch. The dire universal shadow disappears. Savitri and Satyavan are left alone, but neither stirs; an invisible translucent wall rises between them. Nothing moves. Everything waits for the inscrutable Will of God to be revealed.

Book Eleven
The Book of Everlasting Day

Canto One
The Eternal Day : The Soul's Choice and the Supreme Consummation (1)

God's everlasting day surrounds Savitri; she sees all Nature marvellous, without fault. Above her rise level after level of higher worlds; into those heights her soul goes floating up like a bird in spiral flight. Drowned in a sea of splendour and bliss, she turns and sees the living source of their charm and delight, a glorious godhead, and recognises him as the One whom she has faced as Death and Night. The two look at each other, Soul seeing Soul. The divine Being invites her to heaven: "Ascend, O soul, into your blissful home! You are immortal: rise up to heavenly Bliss and lose yourself in infinite Satyavan." But Savitri answers, "I know that I can lift man's soul to God. I know that Satyavan can bring immortality to earth. Allow us to accomplish the task that you have given us." The reply comes: "Savitri, you are my force, my vision, my will and my voice. If you will not wait for Time and God, arise on a ladder of greater worlds to the infinity where no world can be. There, stamp your will on Time." The heaven-worlds vanish in spiritual light and she hears: "Choose, spirit, your supreme choice, not given again." She is offered the Peace of extinction in Eternity; Oneness with Infinity; Refuge in supreme Power, withdrawn and still; the exquisite slumber of divine Bliss. But Savitri asks instead for the divine Peace, Oneness, Power and Bliss for Earth and Men.

The Soul's Choice and the Supreme Consummation (2)

After a silence, a still blissful Voice is heard: "Your thoughts are mine, I have spoken with your voice. I give to earth and men everything you have asked for. And since you have refused my timeless Peace and Calm, since you have chosen to share earth's struggle and pain and leaned in pity over earth-bound men, I join you to my Power of Work in Time. You shall raise the Earth-Soul to Light and bring down God into the lives of men. For ever love, O beautiful slave of God. Descend to life with him your heart desires. O Satyavan, O luminous Savitri, I sent you forth of old. You are my Force at work to raise up earth's fate. He is the soul of man climbing to God. When the hour of the Divine approaches, the Mighty Mother shall take birth in Time and God shall be born in human clay in forms made ready by your human lives. This earth shall be stirred with sublime impulses and humanity shall awaken to its deeper self. Nature shall fill with a mightier Presence, the Spirit shall take up the human play, this earthly life shall become the life divine." The music of that voice ceases and the Soul of Savitri plunges down through unseen worlds amidst joyful voices and triumphant cries as she holds the Soul of Satyavan within her breast. Great wings close above her and she finds herself buried in the hospitable softness of the Earth-Mother's breast. A Spirit looks upon Destiny; a gaze of undying Love falls, a key turns in a mystic lock of Time; ower leans down, a happiness finds its home: over wide earth broods the infinite Bliss.

Book Twelve
Epilogue

The Return to Earth

Savitri awakes from deep trance, lying under green branches on the calm breast of the Earth-Mother. Noon has passed, day is moving towards evening. She feels Satyavan's living body on her bosom. Gently she wakes him. Vaguely remembering, he asks her what has happened. She says: "We have seen the face of God, we have borne identity with the Supreme. Our love has grown greater by that touch, but nothing is lost of mortal love's joy. I am still all that I have been to you before. Let us give joy to all in this marvellous world, for joy is ours: we have been born to lead man's soul towards Truth and God, to bring earthly life a little closer to the divine Idea. Let us go home, for evening is approaching." As hand in hand they turn towards the hermitage, dusk falls; they hear the sound of human voices and many feet. A great crowd arrives led by King Dyumatsena, his blindness cured, and his Queen. The King asks "Where have you been? Wonderful things have happened today but your absence has marred our joy with fear. Savitri, how could you keep Satyavan away from us for so long?" Satyavan replies, "Only because of her love I am still with you on earth." All eyes turn to the lovely girl. A priestly sage asks: "O woman soul, what light and power have brought about through you the marvels that have happened today?" Savitri softly replies, "Awakened to the meaning of my heart that to feel love and oneness is to live, and that this is the magic of our golden change, is all the truth I know or seek, O sage." They can only wonder at her too-luminous words as they turn westward towards Shalwa. Night falls, splendid with the moon dreaming in heaven. The day began before Dawn in deep darkness; now at its end, Night nurses in her bosom the dawn of a new age for Earth and Men.

6: Exploring Sri Aurobindo's Savitri – A Legend and a Symbol

An Introductory Reading List

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Audio-visual materials

See Savitri Bhavan website: www.savitribhavan.org//study materials, to access and download audio and video recordings and publications.

O Savitri, thou art my spirit's Power,
The revealing voice of my immortal Word,
The face of Truth upon the roads of Time
Pointing to the souls of men the routes to God.

SAVITRI p. 703

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